DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 181 133 UD 020 041

AUTHOR Joice, Wendell
TITLE Sex Differences in Self-Actualization of Black College Students. Research Report #79-2.
PUB DATE Jul 79
NOTE 13p.; Not available in paper copy due to reproduction quality of original document

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Blacks: Higher Education: *Psychological Characteristics: *Self Actualization: *Self Concept: *Sex Differences
IDENTIFIERS Howard University DC: Personal Orientation Inventory

ABSTRACT

Much attention has been devoted to issues stemming from the hypothesized differential impact of the American experience on black males and females. Earlier studies of these issues were predominantly concerned with self concept. However, little consistency has been found in the studies of black self concept. A more appropriate construct should be utilized to present the dynamics of the black experience. One possibility is self actualization, which is defined as the push toward actualization of inherent potentials. A measure of black self actualization also has implications for satisfaction of physiological love, safety, belongingness and other survival needs. If the black experience has had a substantially different impact on males and females, then such a difference might be reflected in both their levels of satisfaction of survival needs and their levels of self fulfillment. Using the Personal Orientation Inventory, this study measured the self actualization of black male and female college students. The analysis indicates that there was no difference found in terms of time competence (the extent to which one lives one's life in the present) and that black females were significantly more inner directed (extent to which one is independent and self supportive) than black males. (Author/RLV)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

DEC 1 1 1979

ED181133

# SEX DIFFERENCES IN SELF-ACTUALIZATION OF BLACK COLLEGE STUDENTS

Wendell Joice
July, 1979
Research Report #79-2

CG020041

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Wendell Joice

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ABSTRACT

Examined sex differences in self-actualization (POI) of Black freshmen students enrolled at Howard University for the 1974 and 1976 fall semesters. Found sex differences for the inner-directedness (I) scale; females were more inner-directed than males ($p < .01$); there were no sex differences in time competence (TC). The I and TC scales are the major POI scales. An unexpected finding of year -of-entry differences on the TC scale was noted; the 1974 students were more time competent than the 1976 students. Findings were related to the impact of the Black experience on American students. Limitations for generalization of the findings were discussed.

From the mid-sixties to the mid-seventies, much attention was devoted to issues stemming from a hypothesized differential impact of the American experience on Black males and females. There were discussions of castration, matriarchy, latent homosexuality, serial monogamy, studs and sapphires. Many of these issues were reviewed in a book by Staples (1971). Earlier fervor over these issues, however, has apparently died down without much resolution.

The question still remains, "Has the Black experience in America impacted differently on Black males and females in a substantial way?" A few, fairly recent studies have referred to this issue in terms of differential oppression and/or socialization of Black males and females (Hare, 1975; Aliburuho, 1976; Gruber, 1976). These studies, as well as many of the earlier ones in this area, were primarily self-concept studies.

There has been little consistency in the findings of Black self-concept studies (Smith, 1977). Cummings (1975) presents data which suggest that self-concept is not related to racial status or to racial identification. For example, Cummings reviewed studies which found no relation between Black self-esteem and self-perceived beauty relative to White standards.

Since self-concept studies were frequently used to mirror the developmental impact of the Black experience, it is little wonder that the issue of differential sexual impact on Blacks has not been satisfactorily resolved.

The implication of this discussion is that a more appropriate construct be utilized to reflect dynamics of the Black experience.

One possibility is self-actualization; as conceptualized by Maslow (1972), self-actualization is the push toward actualization of inherent potentialities (fulfilling oneself). For most people, such fulfillment is predicated upon the satisfaction of survival needs. Survival needs and values have certainly been salient aspects of the Black experience. Thus, a measure of Black self-actualization also has implications for satisfaction of physiological, love, safety, belongingness, and other survival needs. If the Black experience has had a substantially different impact on males and females, then such a difference might be reflected in both their levels of satisfaction of survival needs (mastery of the social environment) and their levels of self-fulfillment. Narrowing the scope of this discussion to the experience of education, if Black males and females enter college with differing levels of satisfaction of survival needs, then their college experiences will be different. Their ability to actualize themselves intellectually, emotionally, and socially will be different. Such a situation would have policy and program design implications.

The purpose of this study is to measure self-actualization in Black male and female students, to compare their scores, and to note the stability of any findings. The measuring instrument is the Personal Orientation Inventory (POI) developed by Shostrom (1966) to measure self-actualization as conceptualized by Maslow. Three previous studies of Black students and POI scores were located in the literature. Harper and Hawkins (1977), hampered by small and uneven sample sizes (4 males 24 females), did not report any statistical analysis in their study of Black graduate students. The authors pointed out a tendency for males to have slightly higher scores but drew no conclusions. Both

Jackson (1974), studying middle class, upwardly mobile students attending a predominantly White university, and Martin (1977), studying Virgin Island college students, reported no sex differences in POI scores.

PROCEDURE

The POI was administered to 436 members (183 males and 253 females) of the 1974 freshmen class and 165 members (87 males and 78 females) of the 1976 freshmen classes at Howard University. The instrument was administered during freshmen orientation sessions.

The POI has two major scales:

Inner Directedness (I) - The extent to which one is independent and self-supportive as opposed to dependent and seeking the support of others;

Time Competence (TC) - The extent to which one lives in the present as opposed to the past or future.

A separate analysis of variance was performed for each scale. Each analysis was a 2 X 2 analysis of variance crossing sex and year of administration.

RESULTS

The analyses of the data (appendices 1 and 2) revealed the following relationships among the mean scores shown in Table 1.

- The 1974 freshman group was significantly more time competent than the 1976 freshman group: $\bar{X}_{1974}$= 15.3; $\bar{X}_{1976}$= 14.4.

- No Time Competence difference was found between Black males and Black females.
- Black females were significantly more inner-directed than Black males. This was true for the 1974 and 1976 freshmen. The overall means for inner-directedness were 79.8 for females and 76.4 for males.

Table 1

Mean Self-Actualization Scores of Howard University Freshmen by Sex and Year-of Entry

| POI Self-Actualization Scale | Sex | Year of Entry 1974 | 1976 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Inner Directedness | Male | 76.7 | 75.7 | 76.4 |
| | Female | 80.3 | 78.3 | 79.8 |
| | Total | 78.8 | 76.9 | 78.3 |
| Time Competence | Male | 14.8 | 14.3 | 14.6 |
| | Female | 15.7 | 14.5 | 15.4 |
| | Total | 15.3 | 14.4 | 15.1 |

DISCUSSION

The data reported here appear to conditionally support an assertion that Black females, more so than Black males, have values and behavior hypothesized to be important to the development of self-actualizing person. This finding was stable for both years tested. It was limited to self-actualization as measure by inner-directedness; thus Black females were more self-actualized than Black males in that they scored higher in areas of independence and self-supportiveness.

Generalization of this finding is limited because of the nature of the sample. The sample consisted of entering freshmen; it must be assumed, or at least considered, that college students may not exhibit the same patterns of self-actualization as their non-college peers. Also, the data presented here are not consistent with the findings reported in other POI studies of Black students (mentioned earlier). Since the finding reported here was stable over time, it must be assumed that the inconsistency in findings may be due to differences in the populations studied.

Despite the limitations cited, the finding of inner-directedness differences between Black male and female freshmen bears consideration for more intense research and for university policy and program development. For example, dormitory policies could be established to encourage greater independence and self-supportiveness among male students. Recently, an award winning dormitory staff member was cited, by the male residents, for her motherly, caretaking qualities. In light of the above findings, this type of "mothering" with college males may need reconsideration. Counseling service

programs, such as Male Growth groups, could be designed to focus on and enhance male feelings of self-support. As a final example, utilization records at the Howard University Counseling Service show greater use of counseling services by Black females than by Black males. This could partially be due to greater female enrollment. It could also be related to pre-existing differences in self-actualization; such differences would then be a consideration when designing means of offering services to students.

Another finding which surfaced from the analysis showed the 1974 freshmen being more competent than the 1976 freshmen. This drop in time competence was consistent with a self-concept finding mentioned earlier. Alibararuho noted a decrease in Black self-concept correlated with the wane of the Black power movement (1969-1975). The time period used in the present study (1975-1976) overlaps that used in the Alibaruho study and, hence, may reflect the same process.

In conclusion, the primary question addressed by this study concerned the possible differential impact of the American experience on Black males and females. Significant differences in self-actualization scores which may reflect such a differential impact were noted in the data. Limitations to the generality of the reported findings were discussed above. Because of the nature of the findings reported here, one other point becomes relevant to the utilization of these POI scores as a reflection of the Black experience. That point is that the Black sex differences on the Inner-directedness scale are consistent with

White sex differences reported in earlier POI studies (King, 1974).[1] Thus, the question arises as to whether the findings reported here are reflective of some unique facet of the Black experience or of some general facet of the American experience. It is recommended that clarifying studies be performed comparing Black and White sex patterns on the POI and/or some other measure of self-actualization.

[1] That is, White females were more self-actualized than White males

## References

Alibaruho, G.L. A Study of Self-Concept of Black College Students. Dissertation Abstracts International, 1976, 37 (4-B), 1887.

Cummings, S. An Appraisal of Some Recent Evidence Dealing with the Mental Health of Black Children and Adolescents, and its Implications for School Psychologists and Guidance Counselors. Psychology in the Schools, 1975, 12 (2), 234-238

Gruber, J.E. Factors Influencing the Self-Esteem and Locus of Control of Adolescents: Results from the NLS first year follow-up. Dissertation Abstracts International, 1977, 37 (8-A), 5382.

Hare, N. Black Male-Female Relations. Dissertation Abstracts International, 1976, 37 (3-B), 1435.

Harper, F.D. & Hawkins, M.A. A Profile of Black Graduate Students on the Personal Orientation Inventory. Journal of Non-White Concerns, 1977, 168-174.

Jackson, P.R. Self-Conceptions in Black Male and Female College Students. Dissertation Abstracts International, Ann Arbor, University Microfilms No. 73-5406.

King, M. Sex Differences in Self-Actualization. Psychological Reports, 1974, 43, 291.

Martin, A.C. Self-Concept, Self-Actualization, and Occupational Prestige Aspirations of Black College Students in the Virgin Islands. Dissertation Abstracts International, 1977, 37 (7-A), 4136-7.

Maslow, A.H. In S.R. Maddi, Personality Theories. Homewood, Illinois: Dorsey Press, 1972.

Shostrom, E.L. Manual for the Personal Orientation Inventory. San Diego, California: Educational and Industrial Testing Service, 1966.

Smith, E.J. Counseling Black Individuals: Some Stereotypes. Personnel and Guidance Journal, 1977, 55 (7), 390-396.

Staples, R. The Black Family. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1971.

## APPENDIX 1

Summary of Analysis of Variance of Self-Actualization Scores-

Time Competence: Sex by Year-of-Entry

| Source | SS | df | MS | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Y (Year) | 84.67 | 1 | 84.67 | 7.98** |
| A (Sex) | 35.22 | 1 | 35.22 | 3.32 |
| AY | 14.94 | 1 | 14.94 | 1.41 |
| Within Cell | 6,330.62 | 597 | 10.60 | |

** $p < .01$

APPENDIX 2

Summary of Analysis of Variance of Self-Actualization Scores-

Inner Directedness: Sex by Year-of-Entry

| SOURCE | SS | df | MS | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Y (Year) | 257.99 | 1 | 257.99 | 2.35 |
| A (Sex) | 1,165.45 | 1 | 1,165.45 | 10.59** |
| AY | 31.45 | 1 | 31.45 | $< 1$ |
| Within Cell | 65,690.46 | 597 | 110.03 | |

** $p < .01$